

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1153

By Clemmons

A RESOLUTION to honor David Drobny, Will Minkoff, and Andrew Leeper of Nashville Severe Weather.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly take great pleasure in recognizing three individuals who, by tweeting timely information, helped preserve the well-being, and in some cases the lives, of Nashvillians; and

WHEREAS, in the early morning hours of March 3, 2020, a powerful tornado ripped through Nashville, destroying everything in its path; hundreds of homes, churches, and public and commercial buildings were severely damaged or destroyed, and two young lives were lost; and

WHEREAS, in the midst of this violent windstorm and the ensuing panic, three gentleman stepped up to provide valuable information that alerted the public to the clear and present danger at ground level; and

WHEREAS, Nashville Severe Weather (Twitter feed: @NashSevereWx) was founded by David Drobny and today is an invaluable online and social media presence that is followed by at least 175,000 Middle Tennesseans; and

WHEREAS, he has been joined in his weather-watching efforts by fellow self-professed weather nerds, Will Minkoff and Andrew Leeper; and

WHEREAS, NashSevereWx focuses exclusively on the weather of the Davidson/Williamson counties coverage area, and when violent weather looms, these three public servants spring into action, tweeting out facts and figures gathered by their own equipment and from local meteorologists and weather services and a growing group of storm watchers; and

WHEREAS, the recognized social media ambassador to the National Weather Service's (NWS's) Nashville office, NashSevereWx uses the #tSpotter hashtag to collect reports from followers, verifies them, and then passes them along to the NWS for improved warning operations; and

WHEREAS, at 12:45 a.m. on March 3, NashSevereWx issued a tweet that read: "LEGIT TORNADO. TAKE COVER IMMEDIATELY." Thus alerted, thousands of Nashvillians scrambled to safety, and the loss of human life was significantly mitigated; and

WHEREAS, as usual in these situations, Mr. Drobny took the lead on the Twitter feed, while Mr. Minkoff backed him up by reading models and communicating with the NWS, and Mr. Leeper served as the broadcaster on their YouTube Live feed; and

WHEREAS, the trio have modestly denied any heroism in their valuable public service, stating that they were only a vessel to communicate information and redirecting all praise to the dedicated professionals of the NWS, yet they are most certainly heroes, both in intent and effect; and

WHEREAS, in his professional life, Mr. Drobny is a University of Tennessee College of Law graduate who practices with the firm of Manier & Herod in Nashville; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Minkoff is a continuity and preparedness professional, and Mr. Leeper is the worship minister at Brentwood Hills Church of Christ and serves as president of the Middle Tennessee Chapter of the National Weather Association; and

WHEREAS, each of these three gentlemen became interested in weather watching in the aftermath of the April 1998 tornado that devastated Nashville; mere days after the latest tornado, they were already searching for ways to improve their response during the next weather emergency; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and commend David Drobny, Will Minkoff, and Andrew Leeper of Nashville Severe Weather for providing lifesaving information to thousands of Nashvillians

during the tornado that recently struck Nashville, thank them for utilizing their talents in service of their fellow Middle Tennesseans, and wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.